

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 ACDA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7101

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUSAKA 3620

FROM MCHENRY AND PETTERSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV WA AO

SUBJ: NAMIBIA: CONTACT GROUP

1. SUMMARY: THE CONTACT GROUP WAS CORDIALLY RECEIVED BY THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT IN LUANDA NOVEMBER 29, AND HAD A USEFUL MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER DO NASCIMENTO AND FOREIGN MINISTER JORGE. WHILE THEY SAID THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT TAKE A POSITION ON A NAMIBIAN SETTLEMENT WHICH WOULD DIFFER FROM THAT OF SWAPO, THEY SHOWED INTEREST IN THE CONCEPT OF A SHARPLY REDUCED, TO A TOKEN FORCE, SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE TERRITORY.

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NOR DID THEY DISMISS THE POSSIBILITY OF UN MONITORING OF SWAPO IN ANGOLA AFTER A SETTLEMENT, THOUGH THEY WERE SOMEWHAT UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE IDEA. DO NASCIMENTO SAID ANGOLA VERY MUCH WANTED "PEACE IN THE AREA." IT WOULD SUPPORT A SETTLEMENT IF ONE WERE REACHED, AND WOULD DO ITS PART TO SEE THAT THE "OBLIGATIONS" OF AN AGREED SETTLEMENT WERE FULFILLED. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHAT POSITION THE ANGOLANS

MIGHT TAKE ON THE TROOP WITHDRAWAL QUESTION AND HOW MUCH INFLUENCE THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO BRING TO BEAR ON SWAPO. END SUMMARY.

2. OUR MEETING WITH THE ANGOLANS WAS CONDUCTED IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF CORDIALITY AND FRANKNESS. PRESENT AT THE TABLE WITH US AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WERE PRIME MINISTER LOPO DO NASCIMENTO, FOREIGN MINISTER PAULO JORGE, VICE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ROBERTO ALMEIDA, FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS OLGA LIMA, AND HEAD OF THE MINISTRY'S WESTERN COUNTRIES DIVISION BERNARDINO SIQUIEROS. EXCEPT FOR SOME COMMENTS AT THE END OF THE DISCUSSION (WHICH, PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE NEED FOR TRANSLATIONS, WENT ON FOR TWO AND A HALF HOURS), PRIME MINISTER DO NASCIMENTO DID ALL THE TALKING FOR THE ANGOLAN SIDE.

3. MCHENRY'S PRESENTATION WAS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS IN PREVIOUS CAPITABLS, BUT, FOR PURPOSES OF CLARITY, WITH EXTRA CARE GIVEN TO THE QUESTION OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS. THE PRIME MINISTER, WHO AT THE OUTSET HAD EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR OUR COUNTRIES' INTEREST IN THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, SAID THAT THE POSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA COULD NOT DIFFER FROM THAT OF SWAPO. HE THEN SAID, "HOWEVER, ONCE AN AGREEMENT IS REACHED, WE WILL DO OUR UTMOST TO ENSURE THAT IT IS FULFILLED." LATER HE STATED THAT ANGOLA WAS PREPARED TO GIVE ITS SUPPORT
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"TO FINDING A SOLUTION," BUT THAT THERE HAD TO BE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN SWAPO AND SOUTH AFRICA. HE REITERATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT "WAS ALSO PREPARED TO SEE TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE OBLIGATIONS OF AN AGREEMENT."

4. THE PRIME MINISTER DOUBTED THAT FREE ELECTIONS COULD BE HELD IN NAMIBIA WITH THE PRESENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS: "THIS WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO HAVING FREE ELECTIONS FOR THOSE WHO FAVOR SOUTH AFRICA, AND NOT FOR THOSE WHO FAVOR SWAPO." BUT PERHAPS, HE ADDED, THE PRESENCE OF A UN FORCE "WOULD ENSURE SOME DEGREE OF FAIRNESS FOR SWAPO." HAVING SAID THIS, HE ASKED WHO WOULD DECIDE UPON THE COMPOSITION OF A UN FORCE. ANGOLA WOULD NOT LIKE TO HAVE ITS "ADVERSARIES" CONTRIBUTING TROOPS TO A UN FORCE. IN RESPONSE, WE DESCRIBED PAST PRACTICES AND EXPLAINED THE ROLE OF THE UNSYG.

5. DO NASCIMENTO COMMENTED THAT THE NEUTRALIZATION OF "TRIBAL MILITARY FORCES" WOULD BE A POSITIVE STEP. HOWEVER, HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE POLICE IN NAMIBIA. THEY WERE CLOSER TO THE PEOPLE THAN WERE THE MILITARY, HAD BEEN AN INSTRUMENT OF OPPRESSION, AND COULD INTIMIDATE SUPPORTERS OF

SWAPO DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. WE ASSURED HIM THAT THE POLICE WOULD BE UNDER CLOSE SUPERVISION BY THE STAFF OF THE UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.

6. WITH REGARD TO POLITICAL PRISONERS, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE FULLY AGREED THAT THERE COULD BE NO LINKAGE BETWEEN THE RELEASE OF THOSE HELD BY SOUTH AFRICA AND THOSE HELD ELSEWHERE. THE PROBLEM OF NAMIBIANS DETAINED IN TANZANIA WAS "NOT A MATTER FOR SOUTH AFRICA." IT WAS AN INTERNAL PROBLEM OF SWAPO, WHICH HAD THE RIGHT TO DISCIPLINE ITS MEMBERS.

7. HE ASKED ABOUT WALVIS BAY. OUR REPLY WAS THE SAME WE HAD GIVEN IN THE OTHER CAPITALS WHERE THE SUBJECT WAS RAISED: CONFIDENTIAL

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IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHETHER SOUTH AFRICA INTENDED TO HOLD ON TO WALVIS BAY INDEFINITELY OR, AFTER A SETTLEMENT WAS ACHIEVED, WOULD USE IT AS A BARGAINING CHIP WITH THE FUTURE INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA. NOR DID WE KNOW WHETHER SWAPO WOULD INSIST ON A COMMITMENT NOW BY SOUTH AFRICA TO RELINQUISH THE ENCLAVE, OR WOULD DEFER THE ISSUE UNTIL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LUSAKA 3620

FROM MCHENRY AND PETTERSON

AFTER NAMIBIA'S INDEPENDENCE WAS ASSURED. ALL NAMIBIANS, HOWEVER, REGARDLESS OF POLITICAL VIEWS, WERE AGREED THAT WALVIS BAY MUST BELONG TO NAMIBIA.

8. AMBASSADOR MURRAY OBSERVED THAT AS PART OF A SETTLEMENT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY FOR A UN FORCE TO MONITOR BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER, AND ASKED IF THIS WOULD PRESENT A PROBLEM FOR ANGOLA. DO NASCIMENTO SAID AN ANSWER TO THIS "COULD BE GIVEN ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE AGREEMENT REACHED AT THE TIME." IN PRINCIPLE HE DID NOT LIKE THE IDEA, BUT WOULD NOT WANT TO PREJUDGE THE ISSUE. IT WOULD HAVE TO BE DISCUSSED
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WITHIN THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT. THEIR THOUGHTS ON THIS WOULD BE CONVEYED TO US THROUGH THEIR UN AMBASSADOR. WHEN WE PURSUED THIS THEME FURTHER AND BROUGHT UP THE NEED FOR ASSURANCES THAT THE BORDER WOULD NOT BE CROSSED BY EITHER SIDE, THE PRIME MINISTER NOTED THAT FULL CONTROL OF THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE WAS UNREALISTIC. THE KWANYAMA SUBTRIBE OF THE OVAMBO WERE A PASTORAL PEOPLE WHO TRADITIONALLY AND OF NECESSITY MOVE BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE BORDER.

9. MCHENRY ASKED TO WHAT EXTENT THE REMOVAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES FROM NAMIBIA MIGHT HAVE A "CORRESPONDING EFFECT ON THE SOUTHERN PART OF ANGOLA." AVOIDING A DIRECT ANSWER, DO NASCIMENTO SAID THE PRESENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS ON THE BORDER DEMANDED A WAR EFFORT AND A MILITARY STRATEGY ON ANGOLA'S PART WHICH IT WOULD PREFER NOT TO HAVE TO MAKE. HE THEN DESCRIBED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A BUFFER ZONE ALONG THE BORDER; BOTH SIDES WOULD PULL BACK AND THE UN COULD STATION FORCES BETWEEN THEM.

10. MURRAY (UK) SAID THAT, SINCE WE WERE BEING VERY FRANK IN OUR DISCUSSION, WE SHOULD TELL HIM THE SOUTH AFRICANS SAY THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN TROOPS NEAR THE NAMIBIAN BORDER AND WANT ASSURANCES THAT THEY WILL NOT INTERFERE IN NAMIBIA AFTER A SETTLEMENT IS REACHED. DO NASCIMENTO LAUGHED AND SAID, "SOUTH AFRICA DOES NOT PUT THIS IN THE PROPER CONTEXT. WE ARE WORRIED ABOUT SOUTH

AFRICAN TROOPS." THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAD NO CAUSE TO WORRY,
FOR THE UN FORCE WOULD BE PRESENT.

11. AFTER JORGE HAD ASKED A FEW QUESTIONS (E.G., ABOUT THE
ROLE OF THE COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA), THE PRIME MINISTER THANKED
US FOR COMING TO LUANDA. HE SAID HIS COUNTRY WAS ANXIOUS
TO SEE PEACE "IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. THUS WE CANNOT
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HELP BUT COMPLIMENT YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS."

12. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THE ANGOLANS WERE GENUINELY PLEASED
TO MEET WITH US AND TO BE ABLE TO HEAR DIRECTLY FROM US OUR
THOUGHTS ON THE NAMIBIA PROBLEM. WE EXPERIENCED NO
ANTAGONISM; ON THE CONTRARY WE WERE AFFORDED WARM HOSPITALITY
BY OUR HOSTS. FROM WHAT DO NASCIMENTO SAID, IT IS CLEAR
THAT HAD WE BEEN ABLE TO STAY ANOTHER DAY, WE COULD HAVE
MET WITH NETO.

13. ALTHOUGH MAINTAINING THAT FREE ELECTIONS COULD NOT BE
HELD IN NAMIBIA AS LONG AS SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS REMAINED
THERE, THE ANGOLANS SEEMED INTERESTED IN WHAT WE HAD TO SAY
ABOUT REDUCTION TO A TOKEN FORCE AND THE IMPOSITION OF UN
SAFEGUARDS. THISD INTEREST WAS QUITE APPARENT THE PART OF JORGE
QHEN MCHENRY AND PETTERSON MET WITH HIM AFTER THE CONTACT
GROUP MEETING WAS CONCLUDED (A REPORT ON OUR CONVERSATION WITH
JORGE FOLLOWS BY SEPTTEL). WE CANNOT EXPECT THE ANGOLANS TO
DIFFER IN ANY SUBSTANTIAL WAY FROM WHATEVER POSITION SWAPO TAKES
ON WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS. HOWEVER, IF THEY SEE
IT IN THEIR OWN INTEREST, CONCEIVABLY THEY COULD USE THEIR
INFLUENCE TO CHANGE SWAPO'S PRESENT RIGID STAND ON THAT ISSUE.
MUCH WILL DEPEND ON WHAT, IF ANY, DEPARTURE THE SOUTH AFRICANS
WILL MAKE FROM THEIR STANCE REGARDING THE SIZE AND SCOPE OF
THEIR MILITARY PRESENCE IN NAMIBIA.LOW

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